SUPPORT FOR START-UPS IN REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Illawarra Forum Inc

Name: Nicky Sloan

Position: CEO

Date Received: 27 July 2017

Legislative Assembly

Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development

Support for Start-ups in Regional New South Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Inquiry. While the opinions offered reflect the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions, we feel confident that many of the issues raised will be echoed across NSW, particularly in regional areas.

About the Illawarra Forum

The Illawarra Forum is the peak body working for community services organisations and for communities in the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven. We support community organisations, promote expertise and innovation in community development, foster industry development and advocate for social justice.

As the leader for the community services sector, the Illawarra Forum represents a significant service industry and employment sector in the region. As part of our leadership role, we engage with those organisations, services and individuals engaged in supporting the community to collect their opinion, expertise and recommendations.

The Illawarra Forum works closely with numerous organisations which provide support to vulnerable people across the region including:

- Home Support services;

- Residential services;

- Services for people with disability;

- Services for individuals and families with multiple layers of social and financial disadvantage;

- Support for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault ;

- Youth work programs;

- Social housing and homelessness services;

- Community health services, including mental health and drug/alcohol services;

- Community legal centre services
- Community development and community capacity building programs.

About the Illawarra

The Illawarra and Shoalhaven covers approximately 5784 square kilometres sprawled along the south-east coast of New South Wales. The region is extremely diverse, with urban centres such as Wollongong City (NSW's third largest city), Shellharbour City, and Nowra; large suburban sprawl, many outlying villages, and rural areas.

Wollongong Local Government Area covers an area from Helensburgh in the north to Lake Illawarra in the south. Wollongong has a population of approximately 200,000, spans an area of 714km sq, and is the third largest city in New South Wales (Sydney and Newcastle are 1st and 2nd largest respectively), and the tenth largest city in Australia.

Shellharbour Local Government Area ranges from Albion Park Rail to Dunmore, has a population of approximately 66,000, and spans an area of 154km sq.

Kiama Local Government Area covers an area of 256km sq from Minnamurra River in the north to Gerroa in the south. Approximately 21,000 people live in the Kiama LGA.

Shoalhaven Local Government Area, with a population of approximately 98,000, consists of forty-nine towns and villages over an area of 4,568 km sq on the South Coast of New South Wales. This geographic area also includes the Jervis Bay Territory with an important Aboriginal community at Wreck Bay.

Health and community services are the major employers across the region, and there is significant growth projected for the sector in the region. However, many community services are provided by social purpose organisations which are not for profits, and are excluded from several grant and funding programs such as the Advantage SME Collaborations Voucher scheme and the Jobs for NSW funding opportunities.

There are also prospect for other sectors, including manufacturing and technology sectors, to leverage opportunities from the projected growth in the community services industry. The Illawarra Forum recently partnered with the University of Wollongong's I-Accelerate incubator to host a Sandpit session. This event brought leaders and innovators from the community services industry together with representatives of innovative start-ups and from business and manufacturing. The event features showcases of some innovations within community services, and then posed some of the wicked problems the industry struggles with. The end result was that several projects were incubated and have been pursued.

The Sandpit session demonstrated that community services want to work with technology start-ups in the pursuit of creative solutions, and that collaborative initiatives are driving the application of innovation to human services problems.

illawarra forum
Voice, Influence, Leadership

Importantly the Sandpit demonstrated the capacity for further relationships to be developed which will support the transition of the region's economy, and build opportunities for many sectors in the region.

 A snapshot of the Sandpit, and some of the collaborations and innovations is attached.

We therefore recommend that in order to leverage and grow to meet the growing needs of the community services industry, business funding initiatives should be made available to social purpose or not for profit organisations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on support for start-ups in regional New South Wales. This is an important issue for our region, and our members. For further information about this submission, please contact █████████████████████████████████

Sincerely,

█████████████████████████

Nicky Sloan
Chief Executive Officer

Innovation Sandpit

In October 2016, Illawarra Forum, as a member of IWAG (Illawarra Workforce Action Group), hosted an event that showcased the best of current and future **innovations** within the community services industry in our region. The event recorded some of the great initiatives that organisations are doing in partnership with other businesses and explored new **opportunities** that could lead to new innovations.

STOP PRESS

Since the sandpit...

CriticalArc have been going from strength to strength since the Sandpit. Their partnership with RAA group already provides lone worker backup to all auto-roadside workers in Australia, and they expect to extend this service to RAA customers in June.

In healthcare overseas, CriticalArc recently launched SafeZone at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in Denver, and we have interest from several NHS Foundation Trusts in the UK.

In Australia they are exploring ways that SafeZone can support NDIS participants, their families and carers, and NDIS service providers. This includes the release of new functions including a timed Check-In feature which will automatically raise an alert if the timer expires.

"We are expecting SafeZone to be listed soon in the Digital Transformation Agency's Digital Marketplace, which will make it easier for many local, state and federal departments and agencies to acquire SafeZone."

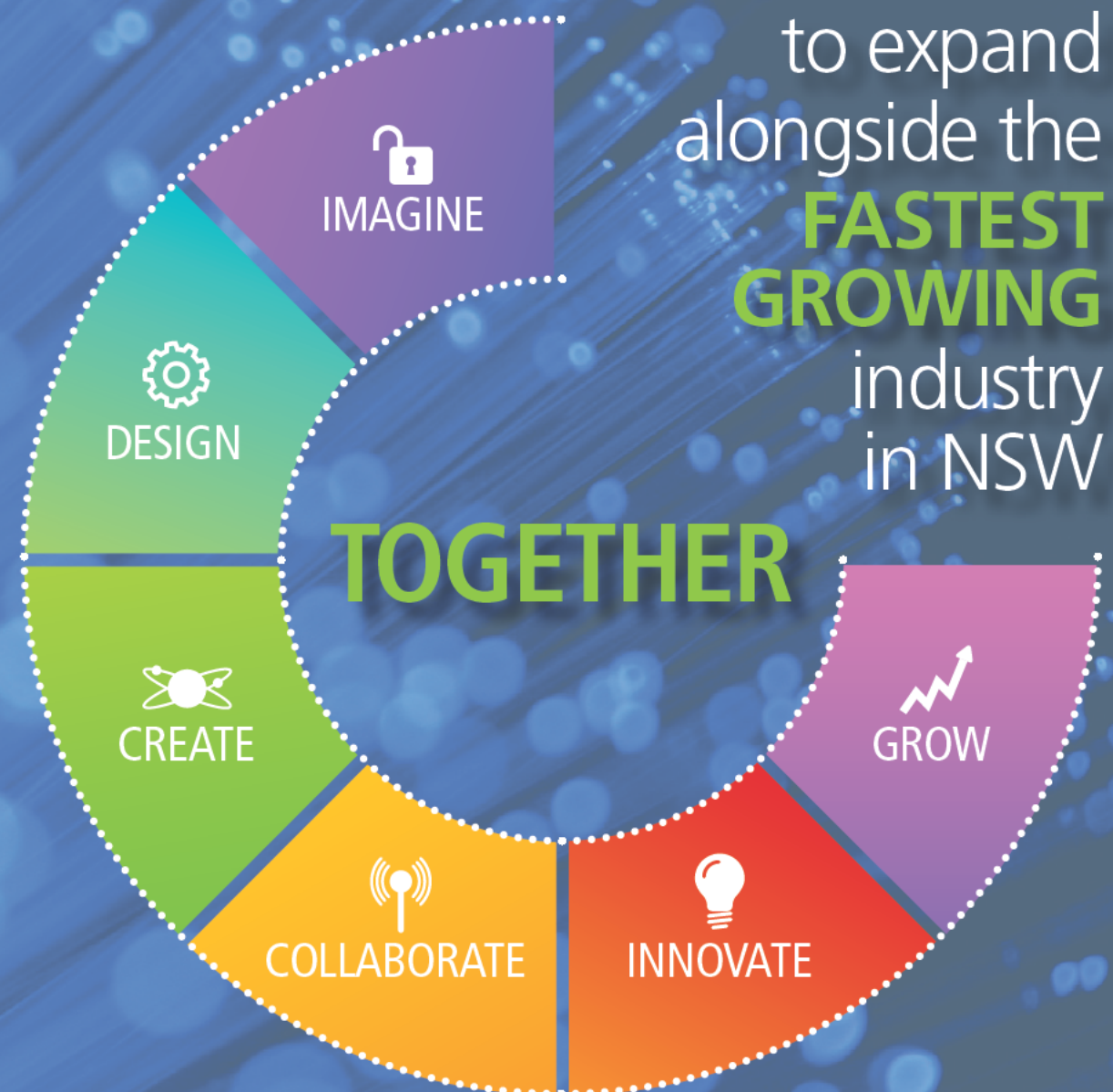**Warrigal** residents and customers have been enjoying virtual reality for the past few months through the lifestyle team. Physiotherapists have had success is using the virtual reality device as a distraction tool or as a reward, and this has helped to provide better outcomes for residents.

Now, a more formal assessment of the benefits is being conducted through the physiotherapy team at Warrigal Albion Park Rail. What we are looking at is to see whether there is a link between the use of virtual reality and reducing pain in older people. The trial will begin in 2 weeks' time and last for a duration of 3 months.

"The virtual reality provides an escape from reality and a talking point."

illawarra forum
Voice, Influence, Leadership

iwag

DISCOVER
UNTAPPED
OPPORTUNITIES

to expand alongside the **FASTEST GROWING** industry in NSW

IMAGINE

DESIGN

CREATE

TOGETHER

COLLABORATE

INNOVATE

GROW

illawarra forum

illawarraforum.org.au

iwag

Why do we need to innovate?

ABS data indicates the Illawarra region (encompassing Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama and Shoalhaven) has a higher than average population of people over 65 years of age, particularly in Kiama 18.8% and Shoalhaven 21.2% (NSW 13.8%). By 2031, the population of the region is expected to increase by 65,000, one in four of whom will be aged over 65.

By 2021 there will be a **32%** increase in the population 65+ and a 52% increase in the population 85+ (which is higher than the State and Australian averages).

The Community Services Industry is part of the largest employment sector in the Illawarra, and 35% growth is projected over the next ten years.

The projected growth of our sector is 2,418,000 sector workers across Australia in the next five years, and if these projections are correct…. **we will need 7,254,000 new workers** to sustain our health and community services between now and 2036.

OLD WAY / NEW WAY

Me3D - bringing 3D printing technology into schools with a social procurement approach.

Me3d co-design and manufacture affordable 3D printing equipment Australian schools. Me3d have strong community commitments and support local disability services. The creation of Seed3D.org and a unique funding model provides education and 3D printers for free to local children in disadvantaged schools across the region. In addition to giving free technology to kids, these programs build a local community hub of expert users able to assist with this technology, benefiting the community as a whole.

'Something that came from nothing'

CriticalArc - A leading technology innovator, designing and developing the distributed command and control solution, SafeZone

CriticalArc are local entrepreneurs which have developed SafeZone-a high-performance cloud service that delivers and streamlines day-to-day safety and security operations and supports the best incident outcomes via a free downloadable phone app. Critical Arc have collaborated with local aged care and disability organisations, the University of Wollongong and businesses world-wide to pilot and enhance a range of applications. Critical Arc contributes to better solutions for duty of care of lone workers, customers and employers.

See. Decide. Act. Do the impossible!

Warrigal - using Virtual Reality to improve the life of older people

Warrigal a local aged care provider who are bringing virtual reality experiences to aged care residents, including people living with dementia, triggering memories, positive emotions and enhancing well-being.

Fibre Optics Design & Construct - bringing non-invasive fibre optic technology into the homes of older people to improve safety.

Fibre Optics Design and Construct use fibre optics to problem solve in innovative ways. Small, non-invasive sensors can be installed in homes to assist people to live safely and independently. These sensors monitor movement, temperature, humidity and light so that one can be alerted to any variation in normal behaviour or conditions.

'The sensor connects to something as simple as an iPad'

Doing things differently

- Community services want to work with technology start-ups, in the pursuit of creative solutions.
- Collaborative initiatives are driving the application of innovation to human services problems.
- The projected growth of the community service industry provides a sound investment climate.
- The Innovation Sandpit demonstrated the capacity to further develop relationships with emerging industries.
- Conduct of the Sandpit has enabled connections to be made to explore new opportunities for innovation.

Wicked Problems:

- Affordable housing
- Service delivery in Regional & rural areas
- Need for innovative service & communication methods
- Health & chronic disease management
- Affordable & accessible transport solutions
- Increased consumer expectations of choice and control
- Better Lives for people living with dementia
- Social disconnection & isolation.

idea